



SPECIAL AND REGULAR MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

Wednesday, July 28, 2021

The Board of Directors conducted this meeting in accordance with California Governor Newsom's Executive Order N-29-20. All Board members and staff participated via teleconference.

DRAFT MINUTES

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT – STUDY SESSION

President Riffle called the special meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 5:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Larry Hassett, Karen Holman, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Yoriko Kishimoto, Curt Riffle, and Pete Siemens

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Chief Executive Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington, Senior Resource Management Specialist Aaron Hébert

President Riffle announced this meeting is being held in accordance with Governor Newsom's Executive Order allowing Board members to participate remotely. The District has done its best to conduct a meeting where everyone has an opportunity to listen to the meeting and to provide comment. The public has the opportunity to comment on the agenda, and the opportunity to listen to this meeting through the internet or via telephone. This information can be found on the meeting agenda, which was physically posted at the District's Administrative Office, and on the District website. President Riffle described the process and protocols for the meeting.

1. Santa Cruz Mountains Redwood Forest Conservation Management (R-21-100)

Senior Resource Management Specialist Aaron Hébert introduced the topics and presenters for the study session and described how redwood forests are managed today to improve forest conditions, the impact of climate change and catastrophic fire, etc.

Anthony Castaños, with Save the Redwoods League, provided an overview of the work completed by Save the Redwoods to protect and manage lands containing redwood trees. Based on their work and research, Save the Redwoods League found that various management practices helped create and improve second-growth forests to create conditions similar to old-growth redwood forests. Additionally, creation of fuel breaks around redwood forests proved key to protecting the forest against severe wildfire.

Mr. Hébert described the Sempervirens 236 Restoration Forestry Demonstration project he managed while working at the Sempervirens Fund. The demonstration project sought to identify desired future conditions of forest stands and test treatment options to create desired healthy forest conditions. Mr. Hébert reported on the variable-density thinning method used by Sempervirens Fund and data resulting from the demonstration project.

Portia Halbert, with California State Parks, provided a presentation regarding the history of prescribed fire use in California and use by California State Parks. Ms. Halbert described the 2020 CZU Lightning Complex Fire and its impact at Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Ms. Halbert explained areas that had recently been subject to a prescribed burn had a less intense fire during the CZU Lightning Complex Fire than other areas.

Justin Garland, with the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), presented regarding the San Vicente Redwoods forest and its restoration and management. Mr. Garland described the timber harvest plan for the San Vicente Redwoods to support forest restoration, shaded fuel breaks, improve fire resilience, etc. Prior to the CZU Lightning Complex Fire, a controlled burn had been conducted in the area, which helped protect the area from the impact of the wildfire. Mr. Castaños provided additional information regarding efforts and projects to heal redwood forests following wildfire, such as in the San Vicente Redwoods forest.

Mr. Hébert commented on the effectiveness of wildfire prevention tools and the urgent need to protect forests against severe wildfires.

Director Kishimoto inquired regarding the evolution and adaptation of redwood trees to climate change.

Mr. Castaños reported they are currently mapping the genome for redwoods to better understand their adaptations to climate change.

Director Kersteen-Tucker requested additional information regarding the impact of prescribed burns on watersheds and how information on this topic will be gathered.

Mr. Hébert commented on the low intensity nature of prescribed burns in contrast to high intensity wildfires, which can harden soil and increase erosion. He added that how watersheds respond to fire is a complex topic, dependent on many factors.

Director Kersteen-Tucker spoke in favor of sharing data and scientific information among agencies, stakeholders, and partner organizations to promote better understanding and response to wildfire.

Director Holman inquired regarding the impact of prescribed fire on fauna in the area.

Ms. Halbert stated the prescribed fires are often conducted in the fall to have the least amount of impact on animals, but some fauna mortality occurs. There is also evidence of fauna fleeing in advance of a fire line, as native fauna is largely adapted to respond to natural fires.

Director Siemens spoke in favor of the District's plan to reinstitute prescribed fires to reduce fuels in natural areas.

President Riffle inquired regarding potential tradeoffs between long-term forest health and short-term wildfire resiliency.

Mr. Hébert responded that each forest project must balance short-term impacts such as the aesthetics of treatment areas and public reaction to tree removal against the need for long-term forest resiliency that is able to better withstand wildfire.

Ms. Halbert responded that prescribed fire is integral to long-term forest health, and the short-term impact of preparing a forest for a prescribed burn or shaded fuel break where additional fuel is temporarily on the ground is outweighed by the benefits of prescribed fires managing forests at larger scales.

Public comment opened at 6:46 p.m.

Ms. Woodworth read the submitted public comments into the record.

John Boothroyd thanked the presenters for the presentation and requested a link to the meeting recording.

Public comments closed at 6:48 p.m.

No Board action required.

ADJOURNMENT

President Riffle adjourned the special meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 6:50 p.m.

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE MIDPENINSULA REGIONAL OPEN SPACE DISTRICT

President Riffle called the regular meeting of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District to order at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Jed Cyr, Larry Hassett, Karen Holman, Zoe Kersteen-Tucker, Yoriko Kishimoto, Curt Riffle and Pete Siemens

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: General Manager Ana Ruiz, General Counsel Hilary Stevenson, Assistant General Manager Brian Malone, Assistant General Manager Susanna Chan, Chief Executive Officer/Director of Administrative Services Stefan Jaskulak, District Clerk/Assistant to the General Manager Jennifer Woodworth, Natural Resources Manager Kirk Lenington, Senior Resource Management Specialist Aaron Hébert, Senior Resource Management Specialist Coty Sifuentes-Winter, Public Affairs Manager Korrine Skinner

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REPORT OUT OF CLOSED SESSION

General Counsel Hilary Stevenson reported there was no reportable action from the closed session on July 14, 2021.

ORAL COMMUNICATIONS

Craig Gleason, frequent District trail user, spoke regarding the increase in miles of District trails since the passage of Measure AA. Mr. Gleason provided comments and observations regarding trails and trail use at District preserves, including the need to advocate for public trails.

Ms. Woodworth read the submitted comments into the record.

Bradley Erickson encouraged the District to allow Class 1 e-bikes in District preserves because it allows older riders to enjoy the preserves. Additionally, these are allowed in national, state, county, and city parks.

Rhoda Fry expressed concern regarding the negative impacts of Permanente and Stevens Creek Quarry on recreation. Additionally, there may not be enough aggregate on the site to fill the Lehigh Quarry pit once the quarry is no longer in operation.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Motion: Director Cyr moved, and Director Siemens seconded the motion to adopt the agenda.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

- Introduction of District Staff
 - Lindsey Contreras, Ranger
 - Megan Maxwell, Ranger

CONSENT CALENDAR

Public comment opened at 7:15 p.m.

Ms. Woodworth reported no public comments were submitted for this item.

Public comment closed at 7:15 p.m.

Motion: Director Kersteen-Tucker moved, and Director Kishimoto seconded the motion to approve the Consent Calendar.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

- 1. Approve the July 14, 2021 Board meeting minutes**
- 2. Claims Report**
- 3. Capital Equipment Purchase for Fiscal Year 2021-22 (R-21-101)**

General Manager's Recommendation:

1. Authorize the General Manager to execute a purchase contract with the California Department of General Services and associated contract dealers for three patrol vehicles and one maintenance vehicle, for a total cost not-to-exceed \$265,000.
2. Authorize the General Manager to execute a purchase contract with the California Department of General Services and associated contract dealers for one agricultural tractor and one mini excavator for a total cost not-to-exceed \$210,000.
- 4. Award of Contract to George Bianchi Construction, Inc., to complete the Alma College Cultural Landscape Rehabilitation Project at Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve (R-21-102)**

General Manager's Recommendation:

1. Authorize the General Manager to enter into a contract with George Bianchi Construction, Inc., of San Jose, California, for a base amount of \$2,258,742 plus a bid alternate amount of \$379,291 for a total of \$2,638,033.
2. Authorize a 15% contingency of \$395,705 to be reserved for unanticipated issues, bringing the total contract to a not-to-exceed amount of \$3,033,738.

BOARD BUSINESS

- 5. La Honda Forest Health Management Assessment – Findings and Contract Amendment for Expanded Scope (R-21-103)**

Senior Resource Management Specialist Aaron Hébert provided the staff presentation describing the objectives for the La Honda Forest Management Assessment and the geography of the La Honda forest study area. Mr. Hébert reviewed a history of redwood forests in the region and history of the La Honda forest study area. The assessment categorized the types of growth in the study area, including amount of old growth, second growth, etc. Mr. Hébert provided estimates of carbon stored in the study area and various habitat and resources impairments within the study

area, such as the overly high density of trees, sudden oak death disease, sedimentation coming from old roadbeds and skid roads, etc. Finally, Mr. Hébert summarized various opportunities in the study area to repair and enhance the ecosystem, including improving watershed conditions, reducing fuels, accelerating the recovery of old-growth redwoods and protecting sensitive habitats.

Director Kersteen-Tucker asked if the impact of prescribed burns on sudden oak death has been studied.

Mr. Hébert stated research on the topic has been completed, but fires have not been effective in halting sudden oak death.

Director Kishimoto commented on the tradeoffs between watershed and forest management, which the Board will need to weigh in on in the future.

President Riffle inquired how the District can educate the public regarding forest management.

Mr. Hébert stated public engagement is helpful, including a page on the District's website, public tours, etc.

General Manager Ana Ruiz commented the District will also be partnering with other organizations who have a strong record in protecting and restoring forested landscapes to develop the final forest plan recommendations and prescriptions.

Public comment opened at 8:28 p.m.

Ms. Woodworth reported no public comments were submitted for this item.

Public comments closed at 8:28 p.m.

Motion: Director Cyr moved, and Director Siemens seconded the motion to authorize the General Manager to amend a contract with Sicular Environmental Consulting and Natural Lands Management of Berkeley, California in the amount of \$15,300 to provide additional public outreach support and add the Woodruff Creek parcel as an addendum to the La Honda Forest Health Management Assessment; the amendment would bring the contract to a total not-to-exceed amount of \$107,293.

ROLL CALL VOTE: 7-0-0

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS

A. Committee Reports

Director Kishimoto reported the Lehigh Quarry ad hoc committee met on July 22, 2021 to review the potential schedule to bring ridgeline easement to the Board for consideration.

B. Staff Reports

Assistant General Manager Brian Malone shared a new video filmed by a District ranger that will be shared on the District's website and social media.

Ms. Ruiz reported on recent meetings with the San Mateo County Farm Bureau and Ayudando Latinos a Soñar (ALAS).

C. Director Reports

Director Cyr reported he attended a meeting of the Santa Clara Valley Water District Water Commission on July 28, 2021.

Director Kersteen-Tucker reported on the productive meeting with the San Mateo County Farm Bureau and great informational hike with the ALAS organization.

President Riffle reported he will be inviting Wendy Millet with TomKat Ranch to present to the Board at a future meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

President Riffle adjourned the regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District at 8:42 p.m.

Jennifer Woodworth, MMC
District Clerk